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Suspect in Spying Case Tells of Change in Plea

Special to The New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO, April 13 — James Durward Harper Jr., indicted on charges of selling missile research data to a Polish spy, said through his attorney today that he had reached a plea bargain and would plead guilty to one count.

Federal District Judge Samuel Conlin said he would not accept the formal plea until Monday to allow Mr. Harper time to think over his decision. The judge cautioned him to weigh the consequences of his decision and confer with his attorney "so at some later date you don't come back into court and say, 'I didn't know what I was doing.'"

Mr. Harper, a 49-year-old engineer from Mountain View, was arrested last Oct. 15 on the basis of an affidavit by the Federal Bureau of Investigation asserting he had received at least \$250,000 from the Polish intelligence service for delivering 61 secret and confidential documents pertaining to Minuteman missile research. The documents were taken from two Palo Alto electronics companies with the aid of Mr. Harper's wife, Ruby Louise Schuler, the affidavit said. Mrs. Harper died June 22, 1983.